INCOMING TELEGRAM Department of State

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FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC
INFO RUMTBK/AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
RUMJFS/AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE
RUHHHQA/CINCPAC POLAD
STATE GRNC
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 1486

LIMDIS

SUBJ: POLITICAL ACTIVITIES OF GENERAL TRAN VAN DON

1. RETIRED GENERAL TRAN VAN DON JULY 20 TOLD EMBOFF THAT HIS SENATE SLATE HAS NOT YET DECIDED WHETHER TO ALIGN ITSELF WITH ANY OF THE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES. HOWEVER, HE COMMENTED LATER IN THE CONVERSATION THAT HE EXPECTS TO RECEIVE HELP FOR HIS SLATE FROM KY IN SUCH THINGS AS TRANSPORT AND OFFICE SPACE THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY. HE ALSO REFERRED TO HAVING DINNER RECENTLY WITH GENERAL LOAN AND KY.

2. DON MENTIONED THE COMPLAINTS AGAINST HIS SENATE SLATE, ONE AGAINST TON THAT DINH AND ONE AGAINST HIMSELF. HE OBSERVED

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY Joan Ingalsbe DATE 10/5/81
RDS ☐ or XDS ☐ EXT. DATE
TS AUTH. REASON(S)
ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS ☐
DECLASSIFIED ☑ RELEASABLE ☑
RELEASE DENIED ☐
PA or FOI EXEMPTIONS

THAT HE DOES NOT THINK THERE WILL BE ANY DIFFICULTY IN HIS OWN CASE AS IT IS MANIFESTLY IMPOSSIBLE TO DEMONSTRATE THAT HE IS PRO-COMMUNIST OR A NEUTRALIST AS ALLEGED IN THE COMPLAINT. DINH'S PROBLEM IS A BIT MORE COMPLICATED BUT DON THINKS HE WILL BE ALLOWED TO RUN. (NGUYEN DINH XUONG, DEPUTY TO THE SPECIAL COMMISSIONER FOR ADMINISTRATION, HAS TOLD US THAT DINH WILL BE REJECTED BUT THE DON LIST WILL BE APPROVED, USING AN ALTERNATE IN PLACE OF DINH.)

3. DON COMMENTED THAT HE RECENTLY ATTENDED A MEETING OF THE LIEN TRUONG OR OLD SCHOOL BOYS ASSOCIATION AND FOUND THAT THE ORGANIZATION IS HEAVILY ENGAGED IN SUPPORTING TRAN VAN HUONG'S CAMPAIGN. HE SAID THE ORGANIZATION IS VERY INFLUENTIAL THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY.

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4. COMMENT: (A) DON MAY NOT BE FULLY COMMITTED TO THE THIEU-KY SLATE, BUT HE IS CERTAINLY HEADED IN THAT DIRECTION. HE THOROUGHLY DISLIKES THIEU WHOM HE BLAMES FOR PLANNING THE COUP AGAINST BIG MINH AND HIMSELF. EVIDENTLY HE IS ABOUT TO SWALLOW HIS DISTATE FOR THIEU, HOWEVER, IN RETURN FOR CAMPAIGN ASSISTANCE.

(B) DON IS NOT FAVORABLY DISPOSED TO THE HUONG CANDIDACY. HE

ALSO DISLIKES THE MEN AROUND HUONG, PARTICULARLY VO LONG TRIEU AND NGUYEN VAN TRUONG. DON WAS PREVIOUSLY HEAD OF THE LIEN TRUONG, WHICH IS NOW CHAIRED BY NGUYEN VAN TRUONG. IF DON SAYS THE LIEN TRUONG IS HEAVILY ENGAGED IN SUPPORTING HUONG, IT IS PROBABLY TRUE. BUNKER

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